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Letter dated 25 April 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have been instructed by my Government to forward a copy of the letter from Dr. Kosta Mihajlovic, Head of the Yugoslav delegation to the negotiations of the Peace Implementation Council working group on succession issues of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, addressed to the Negotiations Mediator, Sir Arthur Watts (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vladislav **Jovanovic**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 25 April 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Belgrade, 17 April 2000

I have been informed that at the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council held at Sarajevo on 4 April 2000, discussion of the continuation of work on succession issues was avoided. On the basis of our recent correspondence, it appears that four newly independent republics are interested in continuing negotiations, which they have communicated in writing. You are aware of the fact that the Yugoslav side has reiterated, and wishes to do it again on this occasion, that it is willing to continue the negotiations, and that it gave approval in principle to your latest proposal more than a year ago. I am aware that you have addressed the High Representative both in writing and directly with a request that a long-standing standstill be overcome.

Despite the fact that all involved are interested in negotiations, the Peace Implementation Council has demonstrated a surprising lack of interest. This is as unusual as it is unexpected. By accepting the role of mediator, the Council has undertaken an obligation to facilitate and speed up the negotiations. But the Council has become, on the contrary, a factor which has been blocking the negotiations for more than a year without any explanation, Thus, it has taken upon itself prerogatives that it is not entitled to per se, nor are they established by the agreement. The only rational explanation for such conduct is that succession issues have assumed a political character, with all its implications at the current juncture of international relations.

Since I am presenting in this letter my own personal views concerning the standstill of the negotiations, I cannot advise you about the current position of the Yugoslav Government on this matter. But I am certain that the Yugoslav Government insists on the continuation of the negotiations on the basis of your last proposal. At the same time, I do not know what its reaction could be to the manifest lack of interest of the Peace Implementation Council.

(*Signed*) Kosta **Mihailović**

Sir Arthur Watts
Special Negotiator for Succession Issues
Brussels